

Remarks:

Applicants hereby submit the following Remarks which Applicants request be considered prior to analyzing this application after RCE. Applicants also hereby file an RCE. Claims 1-12 were pending in the application, all of which were rejected by the Examiner. Claims 1-12 are still pending in the application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

The Examiner rejects claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Simpson (U.S. Patent No. 6,070,153). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Applicants submit herewith a 37 C.F.R. 1.131 Declaration to prove that the invention of the claimed subject matter by Applicants occurred prior to the effective date of Simpson. As such, Applicants assert that the Examiner's rejection is now moot.

Dependent claims 2-5 and 7-10 variously depend from independent claims 1 and 6, so dependent claims 2-5 and 7-10 are patentable for at least the same reasons for differentiating the independent claims from Simpson, as well as in view of their own respective features.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner next rejects claims 11-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Simpson (U.S. Patent No. 6,070,153) in view of Sandberg-Diment (U.S. Patent No. 5,826,245). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Applicants submit herewith a 37 C.F.R. 1.131 Declaration to prove that the invention of the claimed subject matter by Applicants occurred prior to the effective date of Simpson. As such, Applicants assert that the Examiner's rejection is now moot.

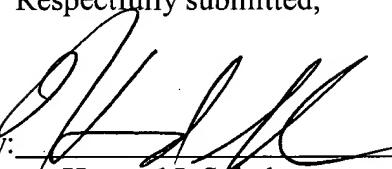
Moreover, dependent claims 11-12 depend from independent claims 1 and 6, respectively, so dependent claims 11-12 are patentable for at least the same reasons for differentiating the independent claims from Simpson, as well as in view of their own respective features.

In view of the above remarks and amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims properly set forth that which Applicants regard as its invention and are allowable over the cited prior art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience, if that would help further prosecution of the subject application. Applicants authorize and request that any fees due be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-2814.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:


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